

REMARKS

Claims 1-5 and 7-8 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1-3, 5 and 7-8 are amended and claim 6 is canceled. Reconsideration based on the above amendments and following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended to Applicants' representative during the April 10, 2003 personal interview. The reasons presented at the interview as warranting favorable action are incorporated into the remarks below and constitute the record of the interview.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 CFR §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein); (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration (since the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution); (c) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; (d) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (e) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

I. The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 1-5 and 7 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,252,564 to Albert in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,400,492 to Morita. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner indicating that claim 8 is allowed and claim 6 includes allowable subject matter.

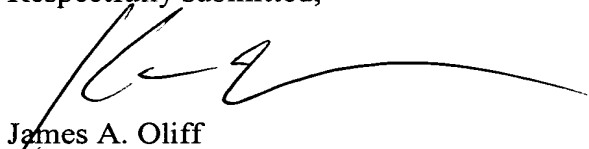
Accordingly, all of the claims now depend from allowable claim 8. Thus, the claims are in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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JAO:KMM/jfb

Attachment:
Petition for Extension of Time

Date: October 17, 2003

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